



## Recommendation for Action

**File #:** 21-2058, **Agenda Item #:** 38.

6/3/2021

### **Posting Language**

Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract with Starside Security & Investigation, Inc., to provide unarmed security guard services to Municipal Court and the Downtown Austin Community Court, for a term of one year for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,200,000.

(Note: This procurement was reviewed for subcontracting opportunities in accordance with City Code Chapter 2-9C Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program. For the services required for this procurement, there were no subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no subcontracting goals were established).

### **Lead Department**

Purchasing Office.

### **Client Department(s)**

Municipal Court.

### **Fiscal Note**

Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 General Fund Non-Departmental Operating Budget.

### **Purchasing Language:**

Multiple cooperative purchase programs were reviewed for these services. The Purchasing Office has determined that this contractor best meets the needs of the department to provide the services required at the best value for the City.

### **Prior Council Action:**

August 12, 2020 - City Council approved Ordinance No. 20200812-001, the City's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget.

June 11, 2020 - City Council approved Resolution No. 20200611-096, which directed the City Manager to explore options for reallocating positions and roles currently assigned to the Austin Police Department.

### **For More Information:**

Inquiries should be directed to the City Manager's Agenda Office, at 512-974-2991 or [AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov](mailto:AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov) <<mailto:AgendaOffice@austintexas.gov>> or to Erin D'Vincent at 512-974-3070 or [erin.dvincent@austintexas.gov](mailto:erin.dvincent@austintexas.gov) <<mailto:erin.dvincent@austintexas.gov>>.

### **Additional Backup Information:**

Since 2008, Austin Police Department (APD) police officers have provided court security services to the Municipal Court. The Reimagining Public Safety initiative prompted staff to assess if these security services could be replaced by alternative resources, such as private security guards. Beginning Fall 2020, the Building Services Department facilitated discussions with Municipal Court, Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC)

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and the Austin Police Department on how to best outsource court security services. In addition, staff researched what requirements, if any, were necessary for an outside vendor to provide these services to the court. It was determined that private security guards would need to be court security certified by the Texas Commission of Law Enforcement (TCOLE) to provide court security services for the City.

Thirteen APD police officers provided security services to the Municipal Court and DACC from 2008 to 2021. In January 2021, the number was decreased to five officers. Eight officers were returned to patrol assignments across the city to maintain adequate staffing levels to respond to 911 calls for service. Currently, there are three APD officers that provide court security services to Municipal Court and two that provide security services to the DACC, until a contract with an outside vendor is secured. Once the court security services are procured, the five officers will continue to provide key duties that only a law enforcement officer is authorized to provide, such as prisoner transfers (transport from Travis County Jail to DACC); inmate monitoring (to include Class C warrant drop off); warrant service (enforcement of court orders, to include serving warrants, self-surrender warrant confirmation, affirming warrant conditions have been met); contempt of court arrests ordered by a judge; and enforcement of lawful orders issued by the presiding judge. The Municipal Court requires the presence of a law enforcement officer in the courtroom corridors (lobby) and the DACC requires law enforcement officers in the courtroom. Continuing the support provided by APD officers will allow for both departments to meet these requirements.

Starside Security & Investigation, Inc. was identified as the contractor to provide unarmed security services. The private security guards will perform an array of functions including: staffing screening stations, performing interior patrols of the building and exterior patrols of parking areas, operating the x-ray and magnetometer and conducting hand inspections, as necessary, staffing the security control room, relay radio messages, and monitoring alarms. The security guards are required to be TCOLE certified and trained in de-escalation procedures before assuming duties in Municipal Court. The private security will also augment staffing performed by law enforcement officers.

The long-term goal is to re-establish a Marshal Program which will be managed by the Municipal Court. Once the Marshal program is implemented, APD can remove all APD officers from the Court.

Starside Security & Investigation, Inc. is being hired to provide court security services to supplement the services currently provided by the reduced number of APD police officers. This agency was determined to be the best to provide these services based on company professional experience, personnel and qualifications, and service capacity. The General Services Administration cooperative establishes competitively bid contracts that can be utilized by Federal and State government agencies through a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements save taxpayer dollars by leveraging the Federal and State governments volume-buying power to drive down costs on hundreds of contracts through a streamlined cooperative purchasing program.

**Strategic Outcome(s):**

Safety.